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ABSTRACT

This unit is one of a series that represents specific moments in history from which students focus on the meanings of landmark events. By studying a crucial turning-point in history, students become aware that choices had to be made by real human beings, that those decisions were the result of specific factors, and that they set in motion a series of historical consequences. The unit contains teacher background materials, lesson plans, and student resources including primary source documents and background materials. The unit has six objectives: (1) to trace the development of emancipation during the Civil War; (2) to describe the condition of the newly freed slaves; (3) to explain the circumstances that led to the Port Royal experiment; (4) to explain the impact of land ownership on the freedmen; (5) to trace the changes in attitudes of government officials toward a land policy for freedmen; and (6) to describe the northern and southern attitudes toward freed people and to explain the impact of these various attitudes on policies affecting African Americans. The unit consists of four lesson plans. The first, the Port Royal Experiment, explains the background of the experiment and examines how northern leaders differed over emancipation early in the war. The second, the life of freed people, develops historical empathy by considering the goals, conditions, and feelings of the freedmen, and examines attitudes and values of Northerners and Southerners, regarding the freedmen. The third lesson reveals the basics of the land redistribution issue. The fourth lesson is a role playing exercise on access to homesteads by freedom. Contains nine references. (DK)

ED 376 107

THE PORT ROYAL EXPERIMENT: FORTY ACRES AND A MULE?

A UNIT OF STUDY FOR GRADES 8-12

By David Vigilante
Teacher Associate, NCHS

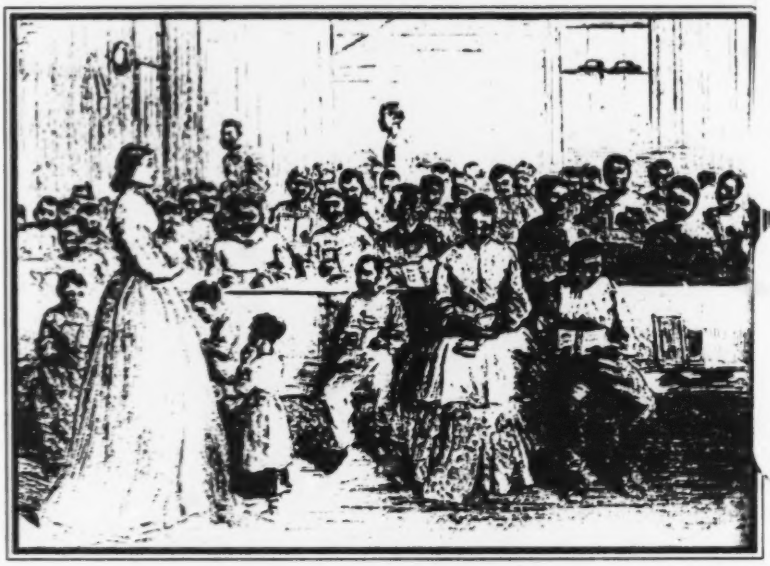

Illustration of a "Freedman's School"
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For information on additional teaching units and other resources from the Center, please write:

National Center for History in the Schools
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Los Angeles, CA 90024-1521

APPROACH AND RATIONALE

By Linda Symcox

The National Center for History in the Schools has developed the following collection of lessons for teaching **The Port Royal Experiment: Forty Acres and A Mule?** Our units are the fruit of a year-long collaboration between history professors and experienced teachers of both United States and World History. They represent specific "**dramatic moments**" in history from which you and your students can pause to delve into the deeper meanings of selected landmark events and explore their wider context in the great historical narrative.

In our approach, the continuing narrative provides the context in which the dramatic moment is situated. By studying a crucial turning-point in history, the student becomes aware that choices had to be made by real human beings, that those decisions were the result of specific factors, and that they set in motion a series of historical consequences. We have selected dramatic moments that best bring alive that decision-making process. We hope that through this approach, your students will realize that history is an ongoing, open-ended process, and that the decisions they make today create the conditions of tomorrow's history.

Our dramatic moments are based on **primary sources**, taken from documents, artifacts, journals, diaries, newspapers and literature from the period under study. As you know, a primary source is a **first-hand** account of any event in history. For example, the telecast or the script of a speech would be a primary source. A secondary source is a **second-hand** account of an event. This would be, for example, the newspaper account of the speech the next day or a newscaster's report about the speech. All historical accounts, such as textbooks, are by their very

nature secondary sources. What we hope to achieve using primary source documents in these lessons is to remove the distance that students feel from historical events and to connect them more intimately with the past. In this way we hope to re-create for your students a sense of "being there," a sense of seeing history through the eyes of the very people who were making decisions. This will help your students develop historical empathy, to realize that history is not an impersonal process divorced from real people like themselves. At the same time, by analyzing primary sources, students will actually practice the historian's craft, discovering for themselves how to analyze evidence, establish a valid interpretation and construct a coherent narrative in which all the relevant factors play a part.

CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

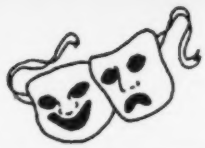
Within this unit, you will find: 1) **Teacher Background Materials** and 2) **Lesson Plans** with **Student Resources**. This unit, as we have said above, focuses on certain key moments in time and should be used as a supplement to your customary course materials. We have chosen to pitch the various lessons on different grade levels and they can usually be adapted to a slightly higher or lower level.

The **Teacher Background** section should provide you with a good overview of the entire unit and with the historical information and context necessary to link the specific **Dramatic Moment** to the larger historical narrative. You may consult it for your own use, and you may choose to share it with students if they are of a sufficient grade level to understand the materials.

The **Lesson Plans** include a variety of ideas and approaches for the teacher which can be elaborated upon or

cut as you see the need. These lesson plans contain student resources which accompany each lesson. These resources consist of primary source documents, any handouts or student background materials, and in many cases, a bibliography for the unit.

In our series of teaching units, each collection can be taught in several ways. You can teach all of the lessons offered on any given topic, or you can select and adapt the ones that best support your particular course needs. We have not attempted to be comprehensive or prescriptive in our offerings, but rather to give you an array of enticing possibilities for in-depth study, at varying grade levels. We hope that you will find the lesson plans exciting and stimulating for your classes. We also hope that your students will never again see history as a boring sweep of inevitable facts and meaningless dates but rather as an endless treasure of real life stories, and an exercise in analysis and reconstruction, rather than rote memorization.



THE PORT ROYAL EXPERIMENT
FORTY ACRES AND A MULE?
(Primary Source)

Upon being informed that the land they lived on would be returned to their former masters, the freed people of Edisto Island wrote to President Andrew Johnson on October 28, 1865 that:

> *....We the freedmen of this Island and of the State of South Carolina—Do therefore petition to you as the president of these United States, that some provisions be made by which Every colored man can purchase land, and Hold it as his own. We wish to have A home if It be but A few acres. without some provision is Made our future is sad to look upon, yess our Situation is dangerous. we therefore look to you In this trying hour as A true friend of the poor and Neglected race. for protection and Equal Rights, with the privilege of purchasing A Homestead —A Homestead right here in the Heart of South Carolina.*
>
> *We pray that God will direct your heart in Making such provision for us as freedmen which Will tend to united these states together stronger Than ever before—May God bless you in the Administration of your duties as the president Of these United States is the humble prayer Of us all.*
>
> *In behalf of the Freedmen*
> *Committee*
> *Henry Bram*
> *Ishmael Moultrie*
> *yates Sampson*

TEACHER BACKGROUND MATERIALS

I. UNIT OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE

As Union troops entered the border states and liberated Confederate held territory, military commanders were immediately confronted with an issue the government had sought to avoid. Despite the fact that President Lincoln was fighting a war "to save the Union," the issue of freedom had to be addressed. As the war continued, cabinet members, congressmen, and field commanders all came to recognize that land was at the heart of the issue of freedom. A land policy was not foreign to the Republican Party which had championed a Homestead Act in its 1860 platform. Many Republicans during and immediately after the Civil War argued the need for small land grants for former slaves and poor Southern whites as a natural extension of the "homestead" policy.

Textbook accounts of Reconstruction seldom make more than a brief and almost fleeting reference to the land issue and neglect to explore the freedman's desire for small plots of land as a means of insuring newly won freedom. Texts usually concentrate on the political aspects of Reconstruction and divide the study into two topics "Presidential" and "Radical." The label "Radical" denotes extreme, and, all too often the policy of "Radical Republicans" is viewed as vindictive and destructive. Accounts of the era which conjure unholy alliances between ruthless military commanders and self-seeking "Carpetbaggers" continue to creep into high school texts.

Reconstruction should be studied within the context of the time using primary source materials to delve into prevailing attitudes of the day. The political study must incorporate both economic and social history in order to provide a balanced treatment of the era. Racial attitudes of the day need to be considered if the picture is to be complete. Students should see the complexity of the era.

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II. UNIT CONTEXT

These lessons would be appropriate at any one of several points: near the beginning of the study of the Civil War, as an introduction to Reconstruction, or as a dramatic counterpoint after congressional debates over Reconstruction have been introduced. The subsequent social, political, and economic development of the nation cannot be clearly understood without a thorough airing of the issues and failure of Reconstruction. This unit is intended only as one focus exercise.

III. UNIT OBJECTIVES

1. To trace the development of emancipation during the Civil War.

2. To describe the condition of the newly freed slaves.

3. To explain the circumstances which led to the Port Royal experiment.

4. To explain the impact of land ownership on the freedmen.

5. To trace the changes in attitudes of government officials toward a land policy for freedmen.

6. To describe the Northern and Southern attitudes toward freed people and to explain the impact of these various attitudes on policies affecting African Americans.

IV. INTRODUCTION TO THE PORT ROYAL EXPERIMENT

By Tom Ingersoll

In order to strengthen the naval blockade of the South, the United States Navy seized Port Royal Sound and the Sea Islands district below Charleston, South Carolina, on November 7, 1861. The local planters and their families fled to the mainland leaving behind some 10,000 slaves. The Sea Islands became a haven for African Americans fleeing Confederate held areas of South Carolina and Georgia.

General Hunter, commander of the newly formed "Department of the South" devised a plan to recruit African Americans into the military and launch an attack on Fort Sumter. As part of his goal to raise a new fighting force and acting without consultation with the President, Hunter issued a military order on May 9, 1862 freeing all slaves in South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. His order was not the first military manumission. General Benjamin Butler declared in May, 1861 that slaves who had escaped to his command at Fortress Monroe, Virginia were "contraband of war" and would not be returned to their "masters." In August, General John C. Fremont, Commander of the Department of the West, issued deeds of manumission. Lincoln feared Fremont's manumission order would provoke the border states and spark another wave of secession. A popular witticism proclaimed, *"Lincoln would like to have God on his side, but he must have Kentucky."* Lincoln therefore rejected emancipation in the interest of appeasing the border states. Hunter's order was likewise revoked. Hunter, however, pressed on in the face of a presidential reprimand and continued to recruit freedmen until the President removed him from his command.

The Sea Islands came under the administration of Salmon P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury. Chase, a staunch opponent of slavery, saw the opportunity to establish a free labor system among the large African-American population of the Sea Islands. His grand scheme was two-fold: to convert the old plantations into business ventures in order to provide the coveted Sea Island cotton for Northern industry and foreign trade; and to prove that freedmen could be effective and productive laborers. This "social experiment" was to be a model for free labor in the post-war period. He contacted Edward Pierce, a Boston abolitionist, and urged him to report immediately to Port Royal. Pierce, working through the Treasury Department and private abolitionist organizations, arranged for a band of fifty-three ministers and teachers to set up schools. The "Gideons," as they were called, increased in numbers as word spread about their efforts to put their convictions into practice. Pierce also issued a call for Northern cotton agents to assist in reestablishing the Sea Islands' cotton-growing industry.

Early in 1863, under the guise of a thinly veiled "confiscation act," the federal government sold at auction 76,775 acres of prime land in the region to recover taxes owed by the absentee planters. At these sales, the government itself purchased three-fourths of the acreage to hold in reserve. Some African-Americans pooled their money to buy 2,000 acres. The remainder was purchased by a consortium of Boston investors who intended to combine their self-interest with the humanitarian goal of teaching the ex-slaves living on the land the virtues of free labor. The investors would pay African Americans twenty-five cents per day (raised to fifty-five cents by 1864) for their labor and sell them the land at cost when convinced that they were "ready for independent farming." The investors enjoyed large profits by 1865 and did sell the land, mostly to African Americans, but at prices 500 percent

over what they had paid.

During the following year, a great struggle ensued over the remaining acreage. The abolitionist General Rufus Saxton was now in charge of local affairs and he tried to ensure that African Americans would be able to purchase the best lands at low prices. But he was defeated by Northern investors willing to pay higher prices. The government continued to hold the majority of the available acres. However, in January 1865, General William Sherman appeared in the region and issued the famous Special Field Order Number 15, which reserved all land thirty miles inland below Charleston to African American settlement, although not, he later claimed, to outright ownership.

African Americans flocked to the area from other regions and began planting forty-acre plots. The Freedmen's Bureau Act which followed by a few weeks appeared to be a legal confirmation of Sherman's redistribution. Lincoln was assassinated shortly thereafter, and Andrew Johnson soon utterly undermined the legislation by guaranteeing recovery of any lands unsold by the government to rebel planters who received a Presidential pardon. The only exceptions were lands seized from American Indians who had supported the Confederacy and African Americans who may have attained titles to these properties.

When Freedmen's Bureau administrator General Oliver O. Howard arrived in October, he sadly attempted to explain to angry African Americans the legal right of planters, who had already begun filtering back into the region to reclaim their lands. Andrew Johnson vetoed a bill strengthening the Freedmen's Bureau in 1866 and put the army in charge of evicting African Americans without full title to their land. The government was willing to

give former slaves land grants on mostly poor lands in the west, but African-Americans had no desire to leave their homes for an uncertain future on poor, distant lands.

The war brought an end to one form of slavery and exchanged it for another. The majority of African Americans who owned no land by 1865 fell into debt peonage to their former masters.

V. LESSON PLANS

1. **The Port Royal Experiment**

2. **The Life of Freed People**

3. **Land Redistribution**

4. **Access to Homesteads by Freedmen**

LESSON ONE

THE PORT ROYAL EXPERIMENT

A. Objectives

1. To explain the background of the Port Royal experiment.

2. To examine how Northern leaders differed over emancipation early in the war.

B. Lesson Activities (One Day)

1. Using the lesson in context of the Civil War, set the stage either through assigned readings or a lecture on Union seizure of the Sea Islands in late 1861.

2. Have students read **DOCUMENT A,** "General David Hunter's Proclamation of Military Emancipation" of May 9, 1862, and **DOCUMENT B,** "President Abraham Lincoln's Proclamation Revoking General Hunter's Military Emancipation" of May 19, 1862 .

3. Hold a general class discussion on the readings to determine what students gleaned from each document. The following questions may be used as a way of assisting students to focus:

   a. What was General Hunter's motive in issuing the proclamation?

   b. Was the President's response predictable?

   c. What were Lincoln's motives?

   d. What might be the impact of Lincoln's response upon:

      1. Confederates at war with the Union?

2. Northern abolitionists?
3. Governors of border states?
4. African Americans on the Sea Islands who had escaped slavery?

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STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT A

GENERAL DAVID HUNTER'S PROCLAMATION OF MILITARY EMANCIPATION
(Primary Source)

Hilton Head, South Carolina, May 9, 1862

General Orders No. 11.—The three States of Georgia, Florida and South Carolina, comprising the military department of the south, having deliberately declared themselves no longer under the protection of the United States of America, and having taken up arms against the said United States, it becomes a military necessity to declare them under martial law. This was accordingly done on the 25th day of April, 1862. Slavery and martial law in a free country are altogether incompatible; the persons in these three States—Georgia, Florida and South Carolina—therefore held as slaves, are therefore declared forever free.

David Hunter, Major General Commanding
Ed. W. Smith, Acting Assistant Adjutant General

From *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series I, Vol. 14, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1885. (p. 341)

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STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT B

PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S PROCLAMATION REVOKING GENERAL HUNTER'S MILITARY EMANCIPATION, MAY 19, 1862
(Primary Source)

I, Abraham Lincoln, president of the United States, proclaim and declare, that the government of the United States, had no knowledge, information, or belief, of an intention on the part of General Hunter to issue such a proclamation; nor has it yet, any authentic information that the document is genuine. And further, that neither General Hunter, nor any other commander, or person, has been authorized by the Government of the United States to make proclamations declaring the slaves of any State free; and that the supposed proclamation, now in question, whether genuine or false, is altogether void, so far as respects such declaration.

I further make known that whether it be competent for me, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, to declare the Slaves of any state or states, free, and whether at any time, in any case, it shall have become a necessity indispensable to the maintenance of the government, to exercise such supposed power, are questions which...I reserve to myself, and which I can not feel justified in leaving to the decision of commanders in the field. These are totally different questions from those of police regulations in armies and camps.

On the sixth day of March last, by a special message, I recommended to Congress the adoption of a joint resolution to the substantially as follows:

> *"Resolved, That the United States ought to cooperate with any State which may adopt a gradual abolishment of slavery, giving to such State pecuniary aid, to be used by such State in its discretion to compensate for the inconveniences, public and private, produced by such a system."*

The resolution, in the language above quoted, was adopted by large majorities in both branches of Congress, and now stands an authentic, definite, and solemn proposal of the nation to the States and people most immediately interested in the subject matter. To the people of those states I now earnestly appeal. I do not argue. I beseech you to make the arguments for yourselves. You can not if be blind to the signs of the times. I beg of you a calm and enlarged consideration of them,

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ranging, if it may be, far above personal and partizan politics. This proposal makes common cause for a common object, casting no reproaches upon any. It acts not the pharisee. The change it contemplates would come gently as the dews of heaven, not rending or wrecking any-thing. Will you not embrace it? So much good has been done, by one effort, in all past time, as, in the providence of God, it is now your high privilege to do. May the vast future not have to lament that you have neglected it.

I have hereunto set my hand, and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

By the President: Abraham Lincoln.

William H. Seward,
Secretary of State

From *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, Series 3, Vol. 2, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1885. (pp. 42-43)

LESSON TWO

THE LIFE OF FREED PEOPLE

A. Objectives

1. To develop historical empathy by considering the goals, conditions and feelings of the freedmen.

2. To examine attitudes and values of Northerners and Southerners, regarding the freedmen.

B. Lesson Activities (One Day)

1. Begin with a brainstorm session on the goals of the freed people using the capture of Port Royal in late 1861 as the historical anchor. Initial comments will probably focus on freedom from oppression. Some students may indicate that ex-slaves desired homesteads or jobs. Ask students to speculate as to the attitudes of the freedmen toward plantation labor. Encourage students to try to place themselves in the position of a newly liberated person. Caution students to remain within the context of the period by suppressing their hindsight.

2. Have students read **DOCUMENT C**, the Northerner Charles Nordhoff's "An Account of the Freedmen of South Carolina;" **DOCUMENT D**, the account of Miss Emma Holmes, a southern woman; **DOCUMENT E**, a letter from Captain Charles Soule, 55th Massachusetts; and **DOCUMENT F**, "Captain Soule's Address to the Freedmen of Orangeburg."

3. Discuss the readings. The following questions may assist in developing class discussion:

   a. How do the accounts differ?

b. What is the perception of African American laborers given in each of the accounts?

c. What is Emma Holmes' perception of "Yankee" attitudes toward the freed people? What evidence can you give to determine if her report is accurate? What inferences can you draw from her account? What clues, if any, appear in her account which indicate bias?

d. What is the code of conduct described in Captain Soule's Address? To what extent, if any, is this different from a slave code?

4. Homework Assignment:

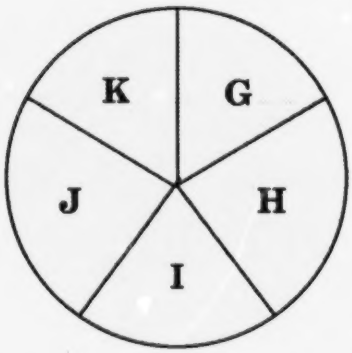
a. Divide the class into five or six groups.

b. Using **DOCUMENTS G** through **K,** share a different document with each group member to read for the following day's jigsaw group.

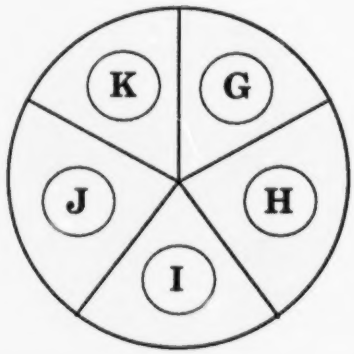
Teacher Instructions:

The jigsaw group: After the students have completed their homework assignment, they should be regrouped. Ask all "document alike" students (those who were assigned the same document for reading) to form additional groups where they will discuss and exchange ideas about their documents. Students should then go back to their original or "jigsaw group," where they can share with the other members what they have learned about their document in their "document alike" groups. A chart has been provided to aid in the process.

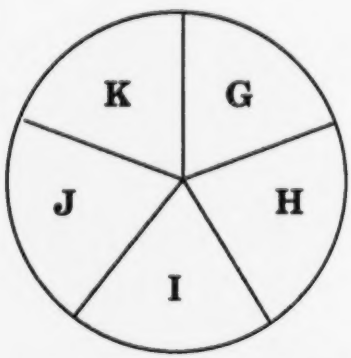
JIGSAW INSTRUCTIONS



Step I: Divide class into groups, distributing a different document to each group member.



Step II: Break up into "document alike" groups for interaction.



Step III: Restructure into original group to share information.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT C

AN ACCOUNT OF THE FREEDMEN OF SOUTH CAROLINA

By Charles Nordhoff, March 20, 1863
(Primary Source)

...Black men are usefully employed in the navy, in the army, and as laborers by the Quartermaster's Department. When you have looked around a little farther, you will find that in yet other useful work not only black men, but black women and children, are busily and profitably engaged.

The planters have always persuaded us that their four millions of slaves were a dangerous class; and the precautions they took and their evident apprehensions in regard to this population prove that they were in earnest. As slaves then, they were dangerous to the community, so every slaveholder told you; as free men they have proved themselves peaceable, law-abiding and useful.

The South Carolina freedmen are not paupers. They receive no support of any kind from the Government, nor charity from any source. They have done almost all the work in the Quartermaster's Department; they have, besides this, raised on the plantations, during the past year of freedom, sufficient food to supply themselves. In the season they have sold garden vegetables, melons, etc., to the troops to a considerable amount; they have...raised, gathered, ginned and packed seventy-five thousand pounds of Sea Island cotton, which will presently come to market.

I hope it has been made plain that the freedmen of South Carolina are not a burden to any one. On the contrary, they have been of great service to us....

From Charles Nordhoff, *The Freedmen of South Carolina: Some Account of Their Appearance, Character, Condition, and Peculiar Customs*. N.Y.: C. T. Evans, 1863. (p. 5)

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT D

AN ACCOUNT OF THE FREEDMEN OF SOUTH CAROLINA

By Miss Emma Holmes, June 2, 1865

(Primary Source)

....They have freed the negroes and now don't know what to do with them, as the negroes think freedom means freedom from labor and equality with whites, but especially the former, neither of which ideas suit the Yankee in practice, however much they may preach about them. The truth is they hate the negroes and are not willing for their extermination but assist largely in that mode of abolishing slavery. A few days ago, William Trenholm, in Columbia, whipped one of his servants for insolence. The case was reported to Col. Horton, Yankee Commander, who summoned him to his office and questioned him thereupon, adding that such punishment was not <u>legal</u> now. "But what must I do,"answered Mr. T[renholm], "his insolence was so great I could not put up with it." "Why, shoot the damned rascal, shoot him." And thus the philanthropy of their Yankee brethren is displayed everywhere where the negroes are in their employment: Whip a man, a fellow being with a soul, degrade by the lash to the level of a dog—oh no, that is terrible, sinful, lowering themselves to the footing of a d—d Southern slaveholder—those monsters of iniquity—but shoot the rascals to be sure upon the spot, if they disobey the least order....

From <u>*The Diary of Miss Emma Holmes, 1861-1866.*</u> Ed. John F.Marszalek. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979. (p. 447)

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT E

LETTER TO THE COMMANDING OFFICER FROM CAPTAIN CHARLES SOULE, WHITE OFFICER IN THE 55TH MASSACHUSETTS, A BLACK REGIMENT
(Primary Source)

Orangeburg, S. C., June 12, 1865.

...It is found very difficult to disabuse the negroes of the false and exaggerated ideas of freedom they have received, in a great measure, from our own colored troops. They have been led to expect that all the property of their former masters was to be divided out to them; and the most reasonable fancy which prevails, is that besides receiving their food, clothes, the free rent of houses and gardens, and the privilege of keeping their hogs and poultry, they are to take for themselves all day Saturday and Sunday, and to receive half the crops. Their long experience of slavery has made them so distrustful of all whites, that on many plantations they persist still in giving credit only to the rumors set afloat by people of their own color, and believe that the officers who have addressed them are rebels in disguise. Even where they are satisfied that the idea of freedom comprehends law, order, and hard labor, there are many whom the absence of the usual restraint and fear of punishment renders idle, insolent, vagrant and thievish....

In the opinion of a majority of the Commission, little danger to the welfare of society, or of the country, need be apprehended from the former slaveowners, who appear generally desirous to become good citizens. It is the ignorance, the prejudice, the brutality, and the educated idleness—if so it can be termed—of the freedmen—all attributable, not so much to their race, as to the system of slavery under which they have lived—that are mainly to be watched and placed under restraint...It is a general complaint on the part of the planters that although the laborers have had fair offers made to them of compensation, including a share of the crops, they nearly all have shortened their day's work several hours, and persist in taking to themselves every Saturday.

In districts remote from our posts of occupation the plantation discipline still prevails, and cases of flogging and shooting are continually brought to the notice of the Commission from places sixty or eighty miles from Orangeburg. Nor are the planters always to be blamed for such measures of self-defense. There must be some restraint in every community, and where there are but two classes, the

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT E

one educated and intelligent, the other ignorant and degraded, it is preferable, if one class must govern, that it be the former. It is to be hoped, however, that civil or military authority will soon supplant such an exercise of irresponsible power which is liable to great abuse...

Company E, 4th U.S. Colored Infantry, District of Columbia, 1865. Copyright, 1911 Review of Reviews Co.

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S-17 1865, Letters Received (series 15), Washington Headquarters, Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, Record Group 105, National Archives.

CAPTAIN SOULE 'S ADDRESS TO THE FREEDMEN OF ORANGEBURG

(Primary Source)

To the Freedpeople of Orangeburg District.

...You are now free, but you must know that the only difference you can feel yet, between slavery and freedom, is that neither you nor your children can be bought or sold. You may have a harder time this year than you have ever had before; it will be the price you pay for your freedom. You will have to work hard, and get very little to eat, and very few clothes to wear. If you get through this year alive and well, you should be thankful...The plantation you live on is not yours, nor the houses, nor the cattle, mules and horses; the seed you planted with was not yours, and the ploughs and hoes do not belong to you...You must remember that your children, your old people, and the cripples, belong to you to support now, and all that is given to them is so much pay to you for your work. If you ask for anything more; if you ask for a half of the crop, or even a third, you ask for too much; you wish to get more than you could get if you had been free all your lives. Do not ask for Saturday either: free people everywhere else work Saturday, and you have no more right to the day than they have...Begin early at sunrise, and do not take more than two hours at noon. Do not think, because you are free you can choose your own kind of work. Every man must work under orders...There must be a head man everywhere, and on a plantation the head man, who gives all the orders, is the owner of the place. Whatever he tells you to do you must do at once, and cheerfully. Never give him a cross word or an impudent answer. If the work is hard, do not stop to talk about it, but do it first and rest afterwards. If you are told to go into the field and hoe, see who can go first and lead the row. If you are told to build a fence, build it better than any fence you know of. If you are told to drive the carriage Sunday, or to mind the cattle, do it, for necessary work must be done even on the Sabbath. Whatever the order is, try and obey it without a word.

There are different kinds of work. One man is a doctor, another is a minister, another a soldier. One black man may be a field hand, one a blacksmith, one a carpenter, and still another a house-servant. Every man has his own place, his own trade that he was brought up to, and he must stick to it. The house-servants must not want to go into the field, nor the field hands into the house. If a man

works, no matter in what business, he is doing well. The only shame is to be idle and lazy....

Do not think of leaving the plantation where you belong. If you try to go to Charleston, or any other city, you will find no work to do, and nothing to eat. You will starve, or fall sick and die. Stay where you are, in your own homes, even if you are suffering. There is no better place for you anywhere else.

You will want to know what to do when a husband and wife live on different places. Of course they ought to be together, but this year, they have their crops planted on their own places, and they must stay to work them. At the end of the year they can live together. Until then they must see each other only once in a while....

In short, do just about as the good men among you have always done. Remember that even if you are badly off, no one can buy or sell you; remember that if you help yourselves, God will help you, and trust hopefully that next year and the year after will bring some new blessing to you.

This image of Major R. Delany, a graduate of Harvard Medical School, and the first Negro officer to hold a field command, was reproduced with the kind permission of the copyright owner, Schomburg Center for Research in Black History, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

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STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT G

THE MILITARY'S PROMISE OF LAND
(Secondary Source)

"On December 30, 1864, General Saxton sent a trenchant and bitter review of the Sea Island developments to Secretary of War Stanton. Some two weeks later, on January 16, 1865, General William T. Sherman, after consultation with Stanton, issued the famous Field Order No. 15. It was meant to solve the perplexing problem of providing for the numerous bands of Negroes who had followed his army in its march across the South to the Atlantic coast. The order set aside the Sea Islands from Charleston south and the rice lands along the rivers for thirty miles inland for the exclusive use of the Negroes, and provided for their allotment, lease, and sale in forty acre "homesteads". The freedmen were to be protected in the use of these lands until Congress should regulate their title. Sherman afterward maintained that only temporary provision for Negroes was intended, and technically provision was made for only a possessory title. But the freedmen quite naturally anticipated permanent possession; and Saxton later testified that he had begged not to be charged with carrying out Sherman's order if the freedmen's expectations were once again to be broken, and that he had received assurances from Secretary Stanton that the Negroes would retain possession of the land."

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STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT H

DEBATE OVER LAND SETTLEMENT ISSUE, MAY 12, 1864
REPRESENTATIVE JULIAN, INDIANA
(Primary Source)

...One of the chief purposes of this measure is to prevent the establishment of a remorseless system of serfdom over the black. I know very well what is happening in Louisiana to-day under false ideas of reconstruction. I know that a system of enforced and uncompensated labor is growing up there but one remove [sic.] from slavery itself. It is to guard against all this legalized vassalage and wrong by the white speculators of the North and the monopolists of the South that I desire to see this bill become a law.

Give away the lands in small households to the men who have earned them by their heroism and their toils; for without a home no man can have, absolutely, any rights. Land monopoly is slavery in disguise.

...If you seize these lands [estates of leading Confederates] and allot them in small homesteads, you destroy this monopoly and establish independence, liberty, and equality on the ruins of the system which has ripened into this war. You reestablish closely associated communities on the basis of free labor. You make it possible to establish free schools and churches, and by taking away the absolute power of capital over labor you secure the right to the ballot and thus enable the people themselves to guard their political rights. Sir, the Question of land monopoly is the grandish [sic.] question of this tremendous conflict with the rebels. It involves the whole problem of reconstruction ... Real liberty must ever be an outlaw where one man only in three hundred or five hundred is an owner of the soil.

...Not to vote for this bill, it seems to me, is to vote to continue the immense monopoly of the soil in the revolted States without which the rebellion would have been impossible. Not to vote for the bill is to vote that northern speculators and monopolies shall continue to buy up the lands every day sold by the Government for the non payment of taxes, and thus make them the basis of new and frightful monopolies....

House Resolution 276, Congressional Globe, 38th Congress, lst Session, page 2251, May 12, 1864.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT I

PROTEST OF THE FREEDMEN OF EDISTO ISLAND TO GENERAL HOWARD, 1865
(Primary Source)

General William T. Sherman had in January 1865 issued an order permitting freedmen to settle on abandoned plantations. The Freedmen's Bureau Commissioner, General O. O. Howard, supported a division of the abandoned lands into forty-acre plots with title secured in the name of each head of a household. On October 19, 1865, General Howard, acting on orders from President Andrew Johnson, came to Edisto Island to inform freedmen that their former masters had been pardoned and their plantations were to be restored to them. The Freedmen of Edisto Island wrote the following protest to General Howard:

Edisto Island, S.C., October, 1865.

> ***General It Is with painfull Hearts that we the Committe address you, we Have thurougholy considered the order which you wished us to Sighn, we wish we could do so but cannot feel our rights Safe If we do so,***
>
> ***General we want Homesteads; we were promised Homesteads by the government; If It does not carry out the promises Its agents made to us, If the government Haveing concluded to befriend Its late enemies and to neglect to observe the principles of common faith between Its self and us Its allies In the war you said was over, now takes away from them all right to the soil they stand upon save such as they can get by again working for your late and thier all time enemies. —If the government does so we are left In a more unpleasant condition than our former***
>
> ***we are at the mercy of those who are combined to prevent us from getting land enough to lay our Fathers bones upon. We Have property In Horses, cattle, carriages, & articles of furniture, but we are landless and Homeless, from the Homes we Have lived In In the past we can only do one of three things Step Into the public road or the sea or remain on them working as In former time and subject to their will as then. We can not resist It In any way without being driven out***

Homeless upon the road.

You will see this Is not the condition of really freemen

You ask us to forgive the land owners of our Island, You only lost your right arm. In war and might forgive them. The man who tied me to a tree & gave me 39 lashes & who stripped and flogged my mother & sister & who will not let me stay In His empty Hut except I will do His planting & be Satisfied with His price & who combines with others to keep away land from me well knowing I would not Have any thing to do with Him If I Had land of my own. —that man, I cannot well forgive. Does It look as if He Has forgiven me, seeing How He tries to keep me In a Condition of Helplessness

General, we cannot remain Here In such condition and If the government permits them to come back we ask It to Help us to reach land where we shall not be slaves nor compelled to work for those who would treat us as such

we Have not been treacherous, we Have not for selfish motives allied to us those who suffered like us from a common enemy & then Haveing gained our purpose left our allies In their Hands There is no rights secured to us there Is no law likely to be made which our Hands can reach. The state will make laws that we shall not be able to Hold land even If we pay for It Landless, Homeless, Voteless, we can only pray to god & Hope for His Help, your Influence & assistance With consideration of esteem Your Obt Servts

In behalf of the people
Henry Bram
Committee: *Ishmael Moultrie*
yates Sampson

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT J

A FREEDMAN'S ADDRESS
(Primary Source)

We now, as a people desires to be elevated, and we desires to do all we can to be educated, and we hope our friends will aid us all dey can....

I may state to all our friends, and to all our enemies, that we has a right to the land where we are located. For why? I tell you. Our wives, our children, our husbands, has been sold over and over again to purchase the lands we now locate upon; for that reason we have a divine right to the land....

And den didn't we clear the lands and raise de crops of corn, ob cotton, ob tobacco, ob rice, ob sugar, ob everything? And den didn't den large cities in de North grow up on de cotton and de sugars and de rice dat we made? Yes! I appeal to de South and to de North if I hasn't spoken de words of truth.

I say dey have grown rich and my people is poor.

Address by Bayley Wyatt, a freedman from Yorktown, Virginia. The Pennsylvania Freedmen's Bulletin, March, 1867, pp. 15-16; as cited in Magdol, *A Right to the Land*, p. 172.

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT K

TWO LETTERS FROM GENERAL SAXTON TO GENERAL HOWARD, 1865
(Primary Sources)

Confederates who had held land in the "Sherman Reservation" and were exempted from a general amnesty, secured special presidential pardons in 1865. They demanded the restoration of their lands but Saxton refused to return the land and wrote to General Howard that he considered the government obliged to support its "solemn pledge" to the freedmen who had been settled on the land. On September 9, 1865, Saxton restated his position in a letter to General Howard:

> ***"The lands which have been taken possession of by this bureau have been solemnly pledged to the freedmen. The law of Congress has been published to them, and all agents of this bureau acting under your order have provided lands to these freedmen. Thousands of them are already located on tracts of forty acres each. Their love of the soil and desire to own farms amounts to a passion—it appears to be the dearest hope of their lives. I sincerely trust the government will never break its faith with a single one of these colonists by driving him from the home which he has been promised. It is of vital importance that our promises made to freedmen should be faithfully kept."***

General Howard was forced to comply with the President's order to restore land and issued Circular 15 which required land restoration. Former Confederate land owners presented Saxton with a copy of the circular along with their demands for return of confiscated lands. Saxton, although complying with the order in some areas, forwarded each request for return of land in the "Sherman Reservation" to Howard with the following endorsement:

> ***"The freedmen were promised the protection of the Government in their possession. This order [Sherman's Field Order] was issued under a great military necessity with the approval of the War Department. I was appointed the executive officer to carry it out. More than forty thousand destitute freedmen have been provided with homes under its promises. I cannot break faith with them now by recommending the restoration of any of these lands. In my opinion this order of General Sherman is as binding as a statute."***

LESSON THREE

LAND REDISTRIBUTION

A. Objectives

1. To reveal the basics of the land redistribution issue.

B. Lesson Activities (One-Two Days)

1. Use the jigsaw method and have students gather in five "document alike" groups. Students should spend about fifteen minutes sharing insights gained from the assigned documents. Develop "focus questions" if it becomes necessary to maintain "time on task." Restructure the groups to insure that one person in each group has read a different document. Students are to explain the document they read to others in their group. Reassemble as an entire class and open a general discussion on the importance of land redistribution during Reconstruction. Additional questions may include:

    a. Was land redistribution a necessary aspect of Reconstruction?

    b. Would confiscation of the property of "rebels" have created more bitterness and ultimately worsened race relations?

    c. Does the Constitution permit the confiscation of property of rebels? If so, under what circumstances?

2. Homework Assignment:

    a. Have students read **DOCUMENT L.**

STUDENT RESOURCE: DOCUMENT L

A HISTORIAN'S REVIEW OF THE LAND QUESTION
(Secondary Source)

Republicans [were not] willing to move very far toward the goal of land for the freedmen, as became evident during house debates on the Freedmen's Bureau Bill....[The House] included a provision confirming for three years blacks' right to lands set aside for them by General Sherman. The bill also allotted three million acres of public land in the South for homesteading by blacks, and authorized the Bureau to purchase additional land for resale. When the bill came before the House early in February, Thaddeus Stevens moved to add "forfeited estates of the enemy" to the land available to blacks. The proposal was overwhelmingly defeated...

As if to demonstrate the land question's complexities, only two days after this vote and with virtually unanimous Republican support, the House passed Julian's [George W. Julian, Chairman, House Committee on Public Lands] Southern Homestead Act, opening public land in the South to settlement and giving blacks and loyal whites preferential access until 1867. Republicans were quite willing to offer freedmen the same opportunity to acquire land as whites already enjoyed under the Homestead Act of 1862, but not to interfere with planters' property rights. Despite extravagant hopes that it would "break down land monopoly" in the South, Julian's bill proved a dismal failure. Plantations monopolized the best land in the South; public land — swampy, timbered, far from transportation — was markedly inferior. The freedmen, moreover, entirely lacked capital and federal land offices were few and poorly managed. By 1869 only 4,000 black families had even attempted to take advantage of the act, three quarters of them in sparsely populated Florida, and many of these subsequently lost their land. By far the largest acreage claimed under the law went to whites, often acting as agents for lumber companies.

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LESSON FOUR

ACCESS TO HOMESTEADS BY FREEDMEN

A. Objectives

1. To apply what students have learned in previous lessons in a role-playing exercise.

B. **Lesson Activities** (One-Two Days)

Option 1:

1. Create four groups each representing:

   a. Southern whites (former plantation owners)

   b. Northern missionaries ("Gideons")

   c. Northern businessmen and cotton agents

   d. Freedmen

   e. Southern whites (non-slave owning)

2. Pose the issue: Should freedmen have access to homesteads? Under what conditions or terms, if any?

3. Have each group assume the role it has been assigned and come to consensus, if possible, on their goals. The groups should determine their commitment to attaining these goals and the methods they would recommend in reaching these goals. Again, caution each group to stay within the bounds of historical context.

4. Each group should select a spokesperson to present the group's findings to the class. Limit the presentations to an appropriate time per group. Encourage students to use photographs, cartoons, articles from

The New York Times, Harper's Weekly, or other documents to support their point. (Documentation could be gathered in advance in the classroom or extend the time for the activity encouraging student research.)

5. Once the presentations have been made, have the class interact with each group remaining in its designated role. Groups should defend their goals and objectives. Encourage groups to caucus, redefine issues, and negotiate settlements to achieve as many of its goals as possible.

Option 2:

1. Organize a "Meeting of the Minds" presentation. This activity is patterned after the Steve Allen series, "Meeting of the Minds," where several historical figures meet with a moderator to give their views or perceptions on issues. If this option is selected, identify students prior to the activity and have each research the historical character. Students should assume the character of the individual they select. Limit your panel to four persons and a moderator. The instructor may wish to serve as the moderator in order to avoid giving undue responsibility to a single student or assign a group of students to prepare questions for the assigned moderator. Insure that the personalities students assume represent a variety of views.

   Suggested individuals:

   a. *Abraham Lincoln*, "a Northern man of Northern principles," opposed in 1861 to both the spread of slavery into the new territories **and** to immediate, general abolition of slavery.

b. *Andrew Johnson*, a populist Tennesseean, adamantly opposed to "compensating" freed people in any way.

c. *Frederick Douglass*, a runaway Maryland slave who had risen to the forefront of the abolitionist and women's rights movements to become a consultant to Lincoln during the Civil War and ardent lobbyist for black rights throughout Reconstruction.

d. *Oliver O. Howard*, Northern General, head of Freedmen's Bureau who favored a general redistribution of confiscated land to freed people.

e. *Henry Bram*, literate chairman of the Edisto Island Freedmen's Committee.

f. *Nathan B. Forest*, Confederate officer, organized the first Ku Klux Klan in Tennessee following the Civil War.

g. *Jefferson Davis*, proslavery president of the Confederate States of America.

h. *Charlotte Forten*, African American poet and educator who traveled from Philadelphia to Port Royal in 1862 to teach in the freedmen's school; dissatisfied with the inconsistency of government policy, she left Port Royal in 1864.

i. *Sojourner Truth*, ex-slave abolitionist and women's rights activist who devoted herself to helping freed people resettle during Reconstruction.

2. The moderator needs to develop a series of questions to ask the panel. Encourage interaction of the panel members. Once the panel presentation is concluded, have other members of the class address questions to the panel. Members of the panel are to remain within

their role during the period of questioning.

C. **Evaluating the Lesson**

1. Debriefing is an important aspect of either option. Did the individuals or groups hold to their convictions? What conflicts occurred? Were they resolved? What actions may have been necessary to resolve these issues?

2. Assign an essay which focuses on class discussion and assigned readings on Reconstruction. It is suggested that the essay be assigned at the conclusion of the study of Reconstruction so students will be able to better place the land issue within the context of the political history of the era.

This image of "Gideonite" school teachers is reproduced with the kind permission of the copyright owner, Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio.

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4. Du Bois, W.E.B. *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880*. NY: Atheneum, 1975 [1935]. A classic work on Reconstruction by a noted African American author. Du Bois' work is one of the early revisionist interpretations of the period.

5. Foner, Eric. *Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877*. New York: Harper & Row, 1988. The most recent published interpretation of Reconstruction. Although Foner gives only a short analysis of the Port Royal experiment, he clearly discusses the paternalistic attitudes of the Gideons toward the freedmen.

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is an excellent source and highly recommended for student background reading.

7. Litwack, Leon F. *Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery*. New York: Random House, 1979. An excellent source on the black experience during Reconstruction. The index gives specific references to black expectations of land grants.

8. Magdol, Edward. *A Right to the Land: Essays on the Freedmen's Community*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1977. Chapter VI, "Shall We Have Land," is an excellent short reading on the issue of freedmen's acquisition of land. Highly recommended for teacher background reading.

9. Rose, Willie Lee. *Rehearsal for Reconstruction: The Port Royal Experiment*. London: Oxford University Press, 1964. A comprehensive study of the Port Royal experiment and an excellent resource for teachers.

TEACHER RESOURCES

Key Events in Emancipation and the Reconstruction of the South:

1861: The Confiscation Act is passed by Congress, freeing those slaves who were employed by the enemy in support of the war.

1862: Slavery is abolished by Congress in the District of Columbia and the territories, and $600,000 is voted (but repealed in 1864) to finance emigration of freedmen to Liberia. Northern generals in critical need of soldiers organize the first regiments of freedmen in South Carolina and Louisiana. Lincoln proposes the general emancipation of slaves in September.

1863: (January 1) Proclamation Emancipation goes into effect. (The Thirteenth Amendment will be ratified in 1865). This move follows the self-liberation of slaves in many areas. About half of all blacks in the South were free at the end of the war. Congress approves wages for black soldiers, and 186,000 enlist. The Confederate Congress would vote in the last weeks of the war to arm 300,000 slaves, but they were not mobilized. Black federal soldiers would be the first to enter Richmond in 1865, but they were ordered to fall back and let whites take the lead.

1864: National convention of Negro leaders in New York demands complete abolition in the South, and full civic rights in all states.

1865: Freedmen's Bureau to assist the resettlement of blacks is established by Congress. Andrew Johnson's "Presidential Reconstruction" seeks to bring all states back into the Union as soon as possible. He issues pardons to all Southerners who request them, by virtue of which they

may reclaim any land to which others have not established full title. By the end of 1865, all rebel states organize loyalist governments, ratify the Thirteenth Amendment, and elect new representatives to Congress. Republicans refuse to accept Johnson's plan, partly on principle, and because they know Southern whites will manipulate blacks' votes if the North does not defend them; Republicans will lose control of Congress if so many Southern white (Democratic) Congressmen are admitted. Moreover, Black Codes, fierce measures designed to control the freedmen as if they were still slaves, are passed throughout the South after the war, which enrages Northern public opinion.

1866: A Civil Rights Act and a new Freedmen's Bureau Act are passed by Congress over Johnson's vetoes, the first time in history that major legislation became law against a president's will.

1867: "Congressional Reconstruction" continues by overriding Johnson's vetoes. Various acts divide the ten Southern states that remained out of the Union into five military districts governed by generals with dictatorial powers to protect civil rights and keep the peace. A rebel state could end military rule and send representatives to Congress only by ratifying the Fourteenth Amendment, adopting a state constitution that guaranteed the vote to black men, and disfranchising selected ex-Confederates.

1868: Congress impeaches Andrew Johnson. Though acquitted, his power as president is reduced to a nullity. The Fourteenth Amendment is ratified; it makes citizens of all persons born or naturalized in the United States. The Republican General Ulysses Grant defeats the Democrats by 3 million votes to 2.7 million, including 450,000 Southern blacks enfranchised by the Fourteenth Amendment. Republicans are so impressed by this margin of victory that in:

1869: Republicans propose the Fifteenth Amendment, to forbid all states to deny the vote on the basis of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude," which was ratified by 3/4 of the states by 1870. Blacks vote heavily and elect Republican governments, and many black office-holders, including a few representatives to Congress and many to state legislatures; and blacks briefly dominate the government of South Carolina.

1870-71: Force Acts are passed by Congress to suppress the Ku Klux Klan, vigilantes dedicated to driving blacks from politics. The Klan itself was for a time overcome by federal troops, but white terror became even more widespread and open so that blacks (Republicans) were excluded from the polls in many areas by 1876, and Conservative parties (Democratic) came to power in states one by one.

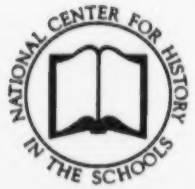
1875: Civil Rights Act by Congress bars segregation. It will be effectually ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in 1883.

1876: The presidential election is disputed because the majority of votes in the three remaining "unredeemed" or unreconstructed states were for the Democratic candidate, Tilden, but the whites kept black Republicans away from the polls. In this crisis, national leaders broker a compromise: Hayes claims the disputed electoral votes, and, in return, when he becomes president he brings Congressional Reconstruction to an end.

1877: The last federal troops leave the South. In the following two decades Congress ignores the fact that blacks are gradually deprived of the vote everywhere in the South, so that it becomes solidly white Democratic. In every case in which blacks carry their protests to the Supreme Court, the Court either nullifies or curtails their rights.

* * *

Other reasons for the collapse of Reconstruction include the demolition of national radical leadership in 1868-69, when many died or were retired by voters angry about black voting. Also, the Republican party in the South was deeply divided, composed of blacks and 'scalawag' whites (Southern unionists, ex-Whigs), and carpetbaggers (Northern Republican ex-army officers, and reformers). This group tended to split between blacks, who favored social welfare spending, and whites, who preferred internal improvements.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